

**To:** distefano.nichole@epa.gov[Distefano.Nicole@epa.gov]  
**From:** Vaught, Laura  
**Sent:** Wed 8/19/2015 7:23:36 PM  
**Subject:** FW: E&E: Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

This all very helpful. We can discuss later.

**From:** Poirier, Bettina (EPW) [mailto:Bettina\_Poirier@epw.senate.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 19, 2015 3:22 PM  
**To:** Vaught, Laura  
**Subject:** Re: E&E: Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

Jewish holidays an issue. Boxer flying the 16th and out the 22nd. 22nd major holiday. You may want to consider that in plan.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 19, 2015, at 3:19 PM, Vaught, Laura <Vaught.Laura@epa.gov> wrote:

I just went back and looked at his e-mail – it says 15 or 16<sup>th</sup> – so he had both dates in his note.

**From:** Poirier, Bettina (EPW) [mailto:Bettina\_Poirier@epw.senate.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 19, 2015 3:18 PM  
**To:** Vaught, Laura  
**Subject:** Re: E&E: Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

Doesn't sound like 15th makes sense given schedule, they start late most likely on the 15th

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 19, 2015, at 3:11 PM, Vaught, Laura <Vaught.Laura@epa.gov> wrote:

I honestly don't know yet on the 15<sup>th</sup> – I haven't had a chance to talk to her or to the schedulers, but will keep you posted.

I will probably go ahead and let Ryan know that **Nonresponsive** and that I'm still checking on Gina for the 15<sup>th</sup>.

And I'll loop with folks here on the Good Sam thing too – thanks.

**From:** Poirier, Bettina (EPW) [[mailto:Bettina\\_Poirier@epw.senate.gov](mailto:Bettina_Poirier@epw.senate.gov)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 19, 2015 3:08 PM  
**To:** Vaught, Laura  
**Subject:** Re: E&E: Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

Thanks. Does the 15th look likely? We don't support cwa waiver based good sam. You should talk to ken about what epa has done administratively so gina up to speed.

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 19, 2015, at 3:05 PM, Vaught, Laura <[Vaught.Laura@epa.gov](mailto:Vaught.Laura@epa.gov)> wrote:

Thanks – by the way – Ryan asked me to check Gina's availability for a hearing on the Colorado spill in mid-September (the 15<sup>th</sup> I think).

**Nonresponsive**

**From:** Poirier, Bettina (EPW) [[mailto:Bettina\\_Poirier@epw.senate.gov](mailto:Bettina_Poirier@epw.senate.gov)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 19, 2015 2:36 PM  
**To:** Kopocis, Ken; Vaught, Laura  
**Subject:** Fwd: E&E: Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

Fyi.

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Bacher, Kathryn (EPW)" <Kathryn\_Bacher@epw.senate.gov>  
**Date:** August 19, 2015 at 2:04:00 PM EDT  
**To:** "Poirier, Bettina (EPW)" <Bettina\_Poirier@epw.senate.gov>, "Kerr, Mary (EPW)" <Mary\_Kerr@epw.senate.gov>, "Gilman, Kate (EPW)" <Kate\_Gilman@epw.senate.gov>, "MacCarthy, Colin (EPW)" <Colin\_MacCarthy@epw.senate.gov>, "Albritton, Jason (EPW)" <Jason\_Albritton@epw.senate.gov>, "Illston, Ted (EPW)" <Ted\_Illston@epw.senate.gov>, "Fox, Thomas (EPW)" <Thomas\_Fox@epw.senate.gov>  
**Subject:** E&E: Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

## Utah lawmakers say EPA spilled mine sludge on purpose

*Wednesday, August 19, 2015*

Two Utah lawmakers want the state's attorney general to investigate whether federal officials purposely caused a Colorado mine release that sent 3 million gallons of toxic sludge into a tributary of the San Juan River.

Attorney General Sean Reyes (R) was briefing the Utah Water Development Commission yesterday when state Sen. Margaret Dayton (R) asked whether U.S. EPA may have breached the Gold King mine to justify a Superfund designation for the site.

State Rep. Mike Noel (R) added that EPA may have caused the release in order to aid environmentalists who want to put a halt to mining.

Though neither lawmaker offered evidence to support their claims, Reyes said he would look into the matter when he meets EPA officials at the Gold King mine today to assess the damage.

Environmental groups quickly blasted the lawmakers' comments as absurd conspiracy theories.

Zach Frankel, the executive director of the Utah Rivers Council, said he faulted EPA for responding slowly to the spill but isn't worried the agency secretly wanted the toxic leak.

"To deliberately cause this would not only violate the Clean Water Act, there would be a whole set of criminal charges that could be filed,"

Frankel said (Brian Maffly, **Salt Lake Tribune**, Aug. 18). -- **SP**